

Chapter Four:

# Urban Design Concepts

## 4 Urban Design Concepts

The purpose of this chapter is to describe the overall urban design concept for the Downtown Village Specific Plan in the context of land use, circulation and parking, and public improvements. Figure 4.1 illustrates some features of the Urban Design Concept. This chapter is organized as follows:

- 4.1 Village Center
- 4.2 Preservation of Mountain Views
- 4.3 Land Use Concept
- 4.4 Circulation and Parking Concept
- 4.5 Public Improvements Concept

### 4.1 Village Center

The heart of the pedestrian-oriented environment of the Specific Plan area is the Village Center. The Village Center is a five block long, pedestrian-oriented and scaled area located between Angeles Crest Highway and Rinetti Lane. The length of the Village Center along Foothill Boulevard is approximately 2,400 feet, allowing one to easily walk its entire length in approximately ten minutes. Pedestrian amenities are focused in the Village Center, including a variety of pedestrian pathways, mid-block crosswalks, streetscape improvements and two public parks. The Village Center is also the heart of the retail/mixed use environment.

The Village Center is envisioned as a walkable, outdoor environment with retail anchors at the west, near Angeles Crest Highway, and at the east, near Oakwood Avenue. The area in between is envisioned to be infilled with smaller scale retail stores

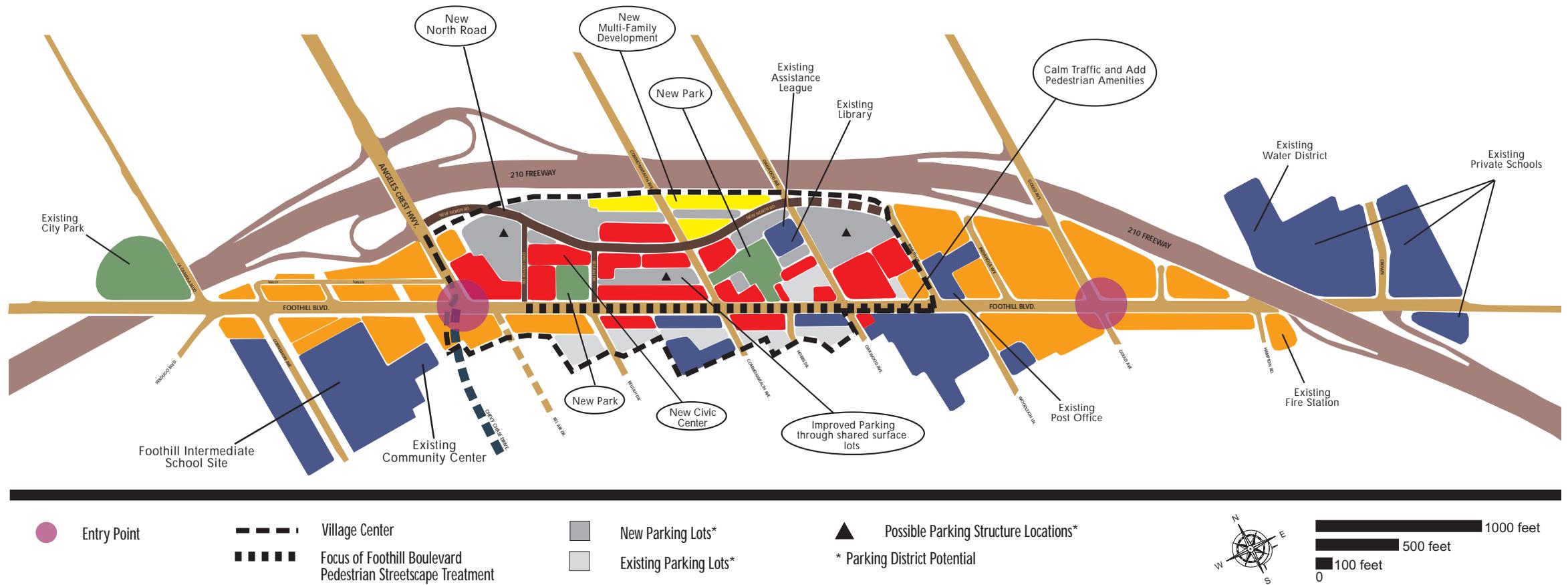
that will encourage pedestrian circulation between Beulah Drive and Oakwood Avenue along both Foothill Boulevard and the North Road.

### 4.2 Preservation of Mountain Views

An important part of the unique quality of the Downtown Village Specific Plan area will be the visibility of the mountains and foothills by pedestrians traversing Foothill Boulevard. The Specific Plan calls for smaller, infill structures to be generally lower in height and for larger structures to have stepped back facades and/or pitched roofs to maintain mountain views from Foothill Boulevard in all directions. Chapter 7 provides development standards and design guidelines in greater detail to achieve this approach to development.



*Views of the mountains from Foothill Boulevard and Gould Avenue intersection.*



**Figure 4.1: Urban Design Concept**

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### 4.3 Land Use Concept

The following features describe the land use concept for the Downtown Village Specific Plan:

- Five land use districts create the environment for the Downtown Village Specific Plan. These land use districts are defined and described in more detail in Chapter 6. These Land Use Districts are:
  - Mixed Use 1, which is focused in the Village Center and allows retail uses on the ground level with office or residential on the second level.
  - Mixed Use 2, which allows retail, office or residential uses on either the ground level or the second level.
  - Residential, which allows either single family detached residential development or senior multiple family residential development.
  - Parks, which provides for two new parks in the Village Center.
  - Institutional, which includes the existing schools, churches, library and other public uses.
- The land use design and zoning creates the potential for approximately 100,000 square feet of new local serving retail development and approximately 25,000 square feet of new local serving office development to meet market demand for these uses.
- The land use design and zoning allows for a new Civic Center to be located in the Village Center that could be phased in over time.

### 4.4 Circulation and Parking Concept

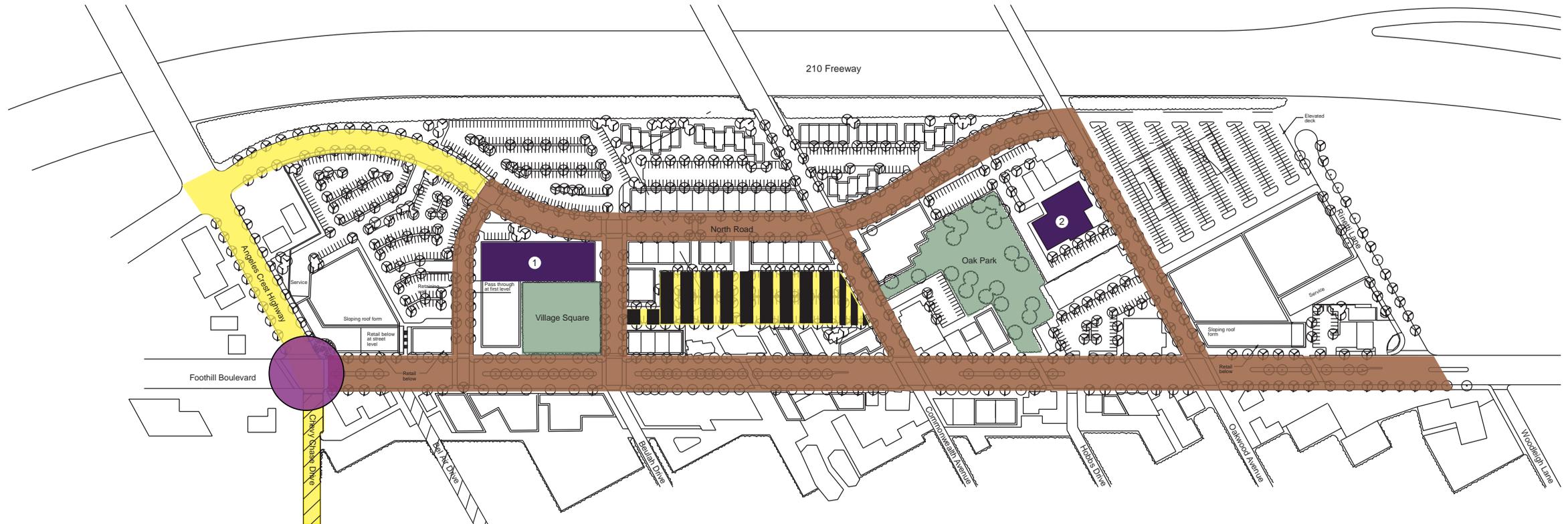
The following features describe the circulation and parking concept for the Downtown Village Specific Plan:

- A new North Road is located north of Foothill Boulevard and serves to:
  - Create a more interesting Downtown pedestrian circulation system offering a variety of pathways between the Village Center’s shopping areas, public facilities and open spaces.
  - Reduce traffic on Foothill Boulevard.
  - Create more pedestrian-friendly, block-scaled development modules.
- The potential realignment of Chevy Chase Drive will further enhance the pedestrian environment of the Village Center by reducing the number of auto intersections. This realignment also has traffic circulation benefits as described in Chapter 5, Circulation.
- The visual quality of the Downtown Village Specific Plan area emphasizes views of stores, with active display windows, pedestrian-oriented streetscapes, parks and people. Short-term convenience parking is located on all of the streets of the grid system. Longer-term parking is screened from view along Foothill Boulevard and the North Road by buildings, and access to the longer-term parking areas is primarily from the north-south streets. This minimizes curb cuts and parking access along Foothill Boulevard and the North Road, which further enhances the pedestrian flow and environment along these streets.

### 4.5 Public Improvements Concept

Figure 4.2 on the opposite page illustrates the public improvements concept, which consists of:

- Pedestrian-oriented streetscape enhancements.
- Public parks, including the Village Square on the west and Oak Park on the East.
- Public buildings, including the Civic Center and the existing library.
- Entry point treatments at the intersections of Angeles Crest Highway with Foothill Boulevard and Gould Avenue with Foothill Boulevard.



Note: Building shapes are illustrative and not intended to indicate final design.

- |   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
|  Entry Point Treatment                       |  Auto-Oriented Streetscape Enhancement |  Public Buildings |
|  Pedestrian-Oriented Streetscape Enhancement |  Public Parks                          |  Civic Center     |
|   |  Public Parking Structure              |  Library          |

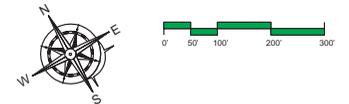
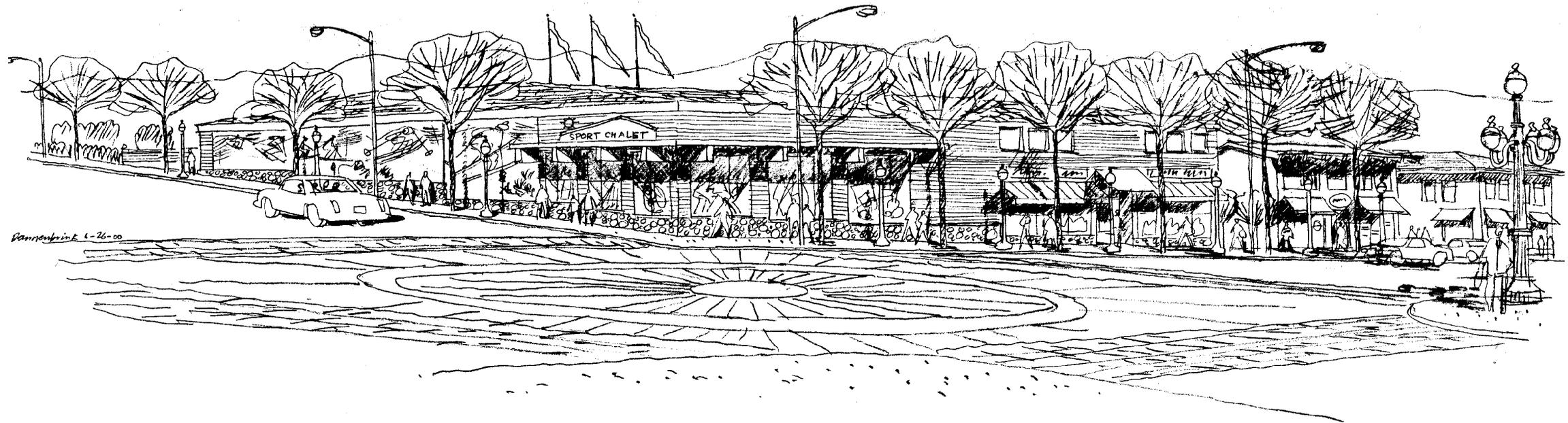


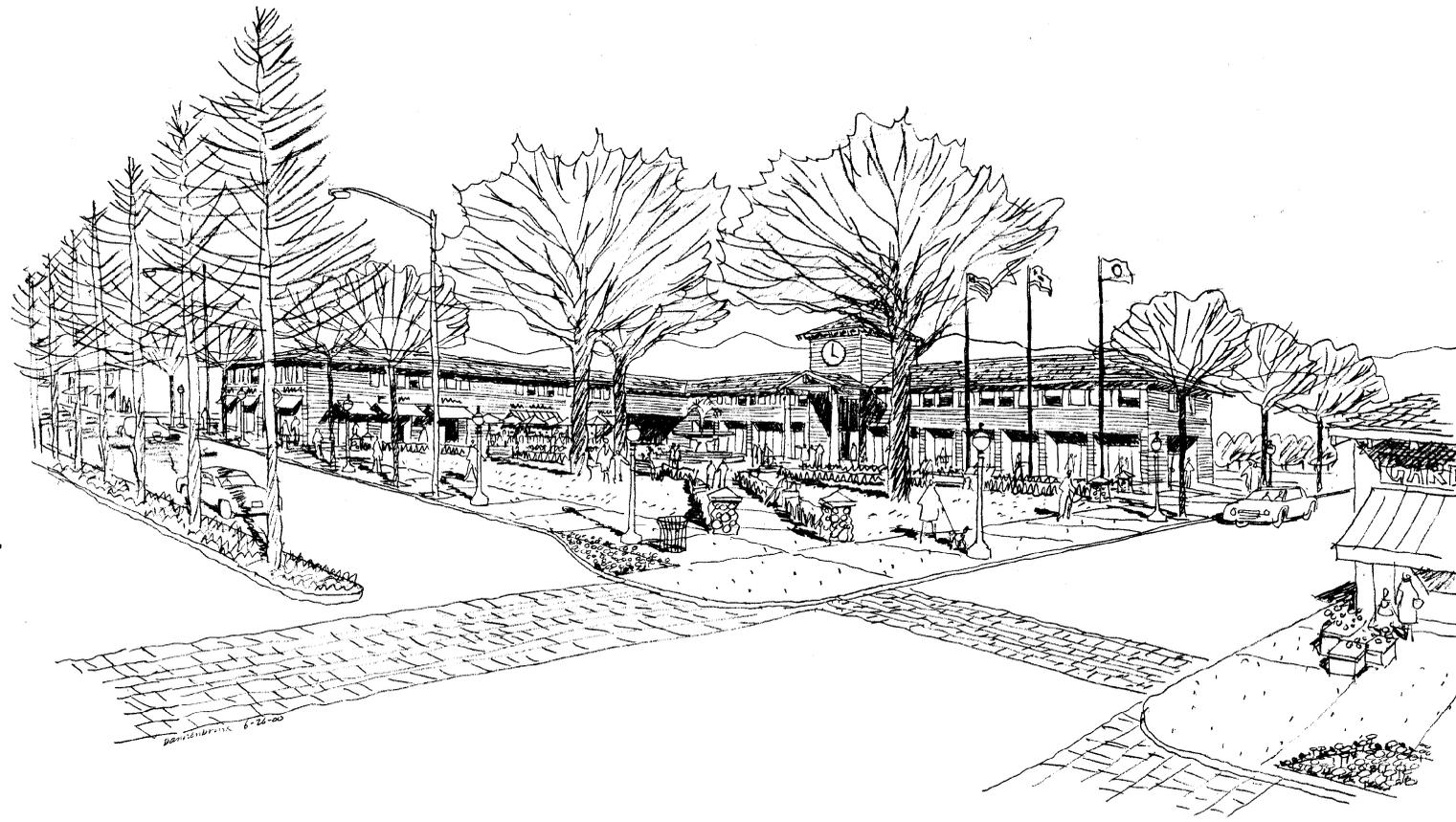
Figure 4.2: Public Improvements Concept

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Entry points should include paving of the entire intersection, i.e., the crosswalks and the area between the crosswalks. This will help create a dramatic sense of arrival to the Village Center. The entry points should also provide landscape elements as right-of-way space permits. Finally, the entry points should feature pedestrian-oriented streetlights that are of a design related to, but taller and more articulated than the predominant pedestrian-oriented street lights in the rest of the Downtown Village Specific Plan area. Public art at the entry points may also be appropriate.



*Entry point enhancements at Foothill Boulevard and Angeles Crest Highway*



*The Village Square with edges activated by the Civic Center, retail and outdoor dining.*

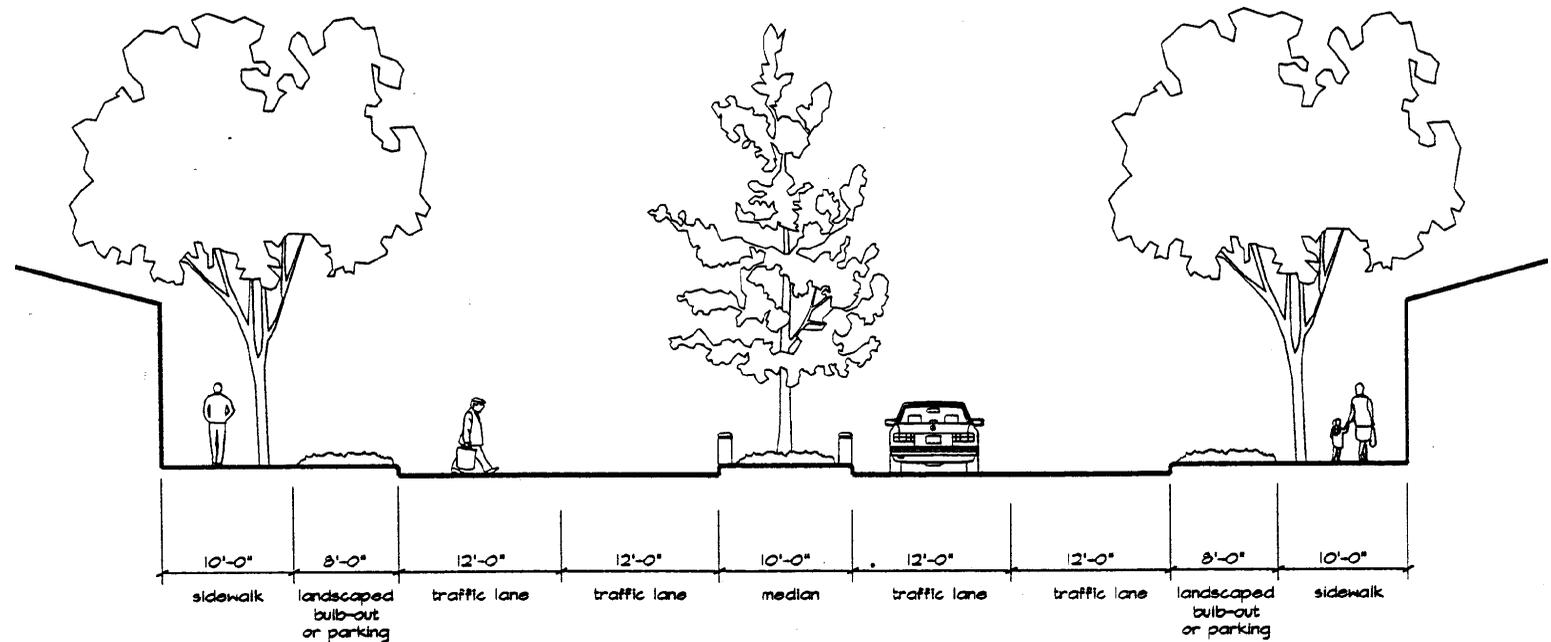


Oak Park, located on the eastern end of the Village Center, should have a more informal character featuring preserved oak trees. Oak Park provides an enhanced setting for the public Library, and would be connected to the bicycle path along the North Road via a bike path either to, or through, the park. The park could feature a small outdoor amphitheater for outdoor events, as well as terraced levels stepping down to Foothill Boulevard and Commonwealth Avenue.

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Proposed public improvement concepts are further illustrated in typical cross sections. Figure 4.3 is the typical Foothill Boulevard cross section for the Downtown Village Specific Plan. This figure illustrates recommendations for:

- Retention of the existing medians and the recently planted deciduous trees.
- Retention of the four moving lanes for traffic.
- Landscaped bulbouts at corner and mid-block crossings.
- Use of deciduous trees along the existing curb lines, spaced to protect views of signage and mountains.



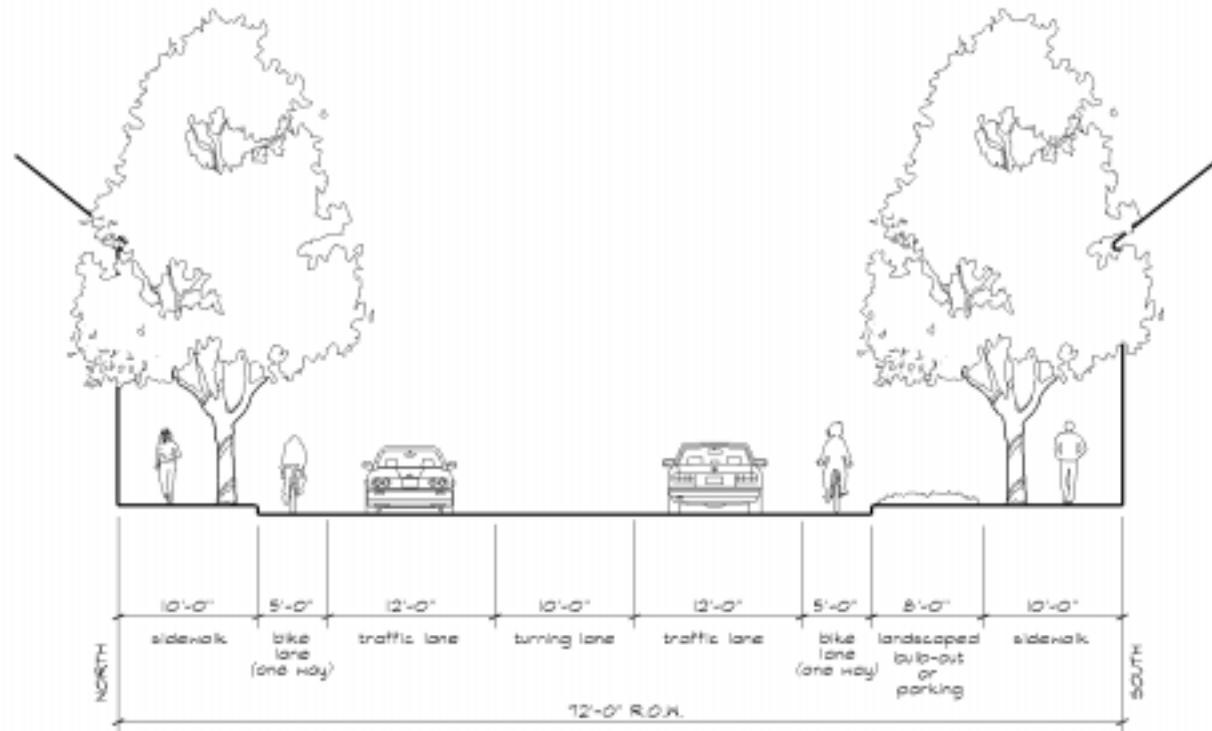
*Note: Illustrative only – actual dimensions will be determined during the City's design process for public improvements.*

Figure 4.3 - Typical Foothill Boulevard Cross Section



***Intersection bulbout***

The public improvement concept for both Foothill Boulevard and the North Road feature intersection bulbouts. As illustrated in the adjacent photograph, these bulbouts greatly enhance the pedestrian environment. First, bulbouts decrease the actual and perceived distance of pedestrian crossings at the intersection. Second, they provide areas for landscaping, lighting and street furniture, such as benches and trash receptacles.



*Note: Illustrative only – actual dimensions will be determined during the City's design process for public improvements.*

Figure 4.4 - Typical North Road Cross Section

The public improvements concept for both Foothill Boulevard and the new North Road also features bulbouts for midblock crossings. These crossings also increase the ease of pedestrian street crossing by shortening the curb to curb distance.

The combination of corner bulbouts and midblock crossings work together to create a pedestrian friendly environment and calm traffic.

Figure 4.4 is the typical North Road cross section for the Downtown Village Specific Plan. This figure illustrates recommendations for:

- Two travel lanes with a turning lane.
- Landscaped bulbouts at corner and mid-block crossings (south side of street only).
- Utilization of a medium-sized deciduous canopy tree, such as London Plane, along the sidewalk lines.
- Striped bicycle lanes along the length of the North Road.



***Midblock crosswalk***

